

VZCZCXRO1367
OO RUEHDE RUEHDIR
DE RUEHRH #2323 3241648
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 201648Z NOV 07
FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7044
INFO RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH 9227

S E C R E T RIYADH 002323

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/20/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SA](#)

SUBJECT: SAUDI ARABIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE US COMMENTS ON THE
QATEEF RAPE CASE

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES MICHAEL GFOELLER FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) A
ND (D)

¶1. (S) On November 20, the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the US Adel al-Jubeir invited the Charge d'Affaires and Staff Assistant (note taker) to a lunch at his Riyadh residence. During the lunch, the Ambassador told the Charge that Saudi Arabian King Abdullah was following the case of a young Shi'a woman who was raped by seven men in 2006 in the Eastern Province town of Qateef "very closely." He assured the Charge that the King would intervene in the case if necessary. "The woman involved in this case will not be punished," he said.

¶2. (S) However, the Saudi ambassador added that the King prefers to attempt to resolve this case through the Saudi judicial system. He said that the King hopes that the system will ultimately return a just verdict, which will punish the perpetrators, not the victim. If this happens, then a precedent will have been created that can govern future such cases. That said, the King will intervene if the court system fails to reach what he considers a just decision, al-Jubeir said.

¶3. (S) Al-Jubeir termed the judge's current verdict in this case, which calls for the female rape victim to receive 200 lashes, very hard to comprehend. He noted that the judge in question is a Sunni Muslim, while the rape victim is a Shi'ite Muslim. The judge's religious prejudices probably explain the decision, at least in part, he said. "It is as difficult for an Eastern Province Shi'ite to receive justice from such a judge as it would have been for an African American to receive just treatment in the south in the 1950s," he commented. He also noted that the two-year sentences given the perpetrators seem very light, since Islamic law normally imposes the death penalty for rape.
GFOELLER